Lindsey McKechnie
Automation Lead

Lindsey heads up the Test Automation team which is made up of two women and three men, so straight away it's clear that gender bias is not a barrier in her working world.

"**I would say there is no gender bias here at Nominet.** I see more women in senior jobs here than I have elsewhere, and they are in roles that are close to my own too, such as lead developers and architects. It's a forward-thinking company."

Perhaps applying to tech companies that have policies in place to counter the effects of gender bias is a positive step any jobseeker can take. Nominet runs training for managers to guard against unconscious bias, for example. **T**he HR team also regularly tracks the pay review process and rewards across the company to ensure that everyone performing at similar levels is treated fairly, whatever their gender.

"In previous companies I have worked in, I think most definitely there has been a gender bias, and I had to learn how to vocalise a little louder just to make sure I was seen and heard. I sometimes think we women get overlooked, excluded, though of course that's hard to prove" she says.

Conflicting priorities

Working in Test Automation means using software to make light work of some repetitive but necessary manual tasks, imperative for continuous delivery and continuous testing, and Lindsey's role is to make sure the process runs as smoothly as possible.

"One of the things I like best about my job is that I get the opportunity, every day, to work on improving the technology and how it's used. It is my responsibility to make sure everyone in my team is enabled to do their jobs well too. There are conflicting priorities for me every day, but I spend time upskilling, teaching, pair-programming with them to get them up to speed, or just giving quick explanations. It's also important to be able to judge the team's individual capabilities and then know when to let them go it alone."

Like many women in tech, Lindsey's pathway into the sector was not straight forward. "I was slightly before my time, being a little older", she remembers, "in the sense that I did a maths degree in the 90s, then maths research which then led to communications engineering research, writing simulations to back up my masters and research theories, and through that I became a self-taught software developer, and then slid into Test Automation which has become my bias."

Just make it happen

Lindsey's first advice to other women considering a career in tech – and coincidentally helping to **#breakthebias** – is: "Aim high and let everyone else drag you down, by which I mean we must think ourselves worthy of those aspirations. Don't waste time thinking about how much better than you everybody else is because they are not. I don't think about gender when making career choices, nor think about other people's genders either when speaking to them. I believe in making sure you put yourself in a position where you get complete and utter job satisfaction, whatever that is, and just make it happen."

Lindsey also recommends adopting a bold attitude to career choices. "Women should do what fulfils them, they should use what they've got. You can be assertive without being arrogant. I have always wanted more challenges and more leadership, and that is what fulfils me now. As a child I saw education as a way out of a relatively disadvantaged background, as a woman I can see that mantra has stood me in good stead. But now my focus is more on exactly what I want to achieve, knowing that nothing can really hold me back."

" *My engagement with tech was slightly before its time* "